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DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77

Auth: DDA REG. 77/1763

Date: 060278 By: 025

25 October 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief Instructor, Basic [REDACTED]
Course, TSD/TR

25X1A

THROUGH : Chief/TSD/TR

SUBJECT : Report on Monitoring Basic [REDACTED]
Course

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I. INTRODUCTION

The writer of this memorandum monitored the Basic [REDACTED] Course from 17 - 21 October 1960 at the request of the Chief, TSD/Training dated 16 May 1960. The purpose of this monitoring was to point out the strengths and weaknesses of this course and to make suggestions and recommendations pertinent to its improvement.

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II. GENERAL

25X1A8a There were three students in this class: one from TSD, one from NE [REDACTED] and one from OTR. The student from TSD was taking the course for the general training and background it offered him in his TSD assignments. The student from NE [REDACTED] anticipated the actual use of this skill and even the necessity of teaching this skill to other personnel. The student from OTR was the writer of this memorandum.

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III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

As stated in TSD Schedule of Course FY 1961, dated 1 July 1960, the course objectives were to:

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IV. STRENGTHS

The writer desires to compliment highly the Chief Instructor for his initiative and sincerity in his total administration of this course. In the planning, organization, and instruction of this course you have demonstrated an awareness of the problems and principles of learning and have shown a capability and proficiency in the use of supporting aids to instruction. A number of very good academic techniques are employed in this course. Obviously these should be retained and even strengthened wherever possible. Mention is made of the following:

1. The many types of training aids are excellent, such as: classroom and laboratory graphics; the cut-away drawings; display models; cut-away models and actual items; exploded view models and graphics. It is to be noted that considerable instructor initiative has been exercised in the production of these aids.
2. The schedule and content of the course, particularly the lab work, was very effective. Cognizance was given to individual student differences whereby each student could proceed at his own pace. The organization of the subject matter started with the "known" and worked into the "unknown." The difficulty of the material was such that it graduated from the easy to the complex. Generally the course was organized on a psychological basis in that any material taught was related directly and immediately to its practical use and need by the student. (The writer of this memorandum is by no means a subject matter expert in this field and cannot state whether or not other elements could have been included that would have been directly related but it is obvious that the time element precluded such offerings. The Chief Instructor, along with other qualified experts in this field using standard or known methods of course analyses, will have to be the judge as to the course content.) The course objectives as stated were adequately met.
3. Student reading kit was ample in quantity and served to provide also for individual student differences.

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4. The handouts, most of which are included as Attachment A, were complete as to directions for student work and were also supplemented by laboratory display models of the actual items to be produced by the students.

5. All supplies and training materials were available and in working condition at the time of need during the laboratory exercises.

6. A rough analysis of the Course Schedule (Attachment B) indicates the following breakdown:

Lectures (including demonstrations)...	13%
Laboratory work.....	80.5%
Films.....	3.5%
Administration	3.0%
Total	100.0%

Since this is definitely a skill type of training, the balance of time spent in laboratory work is very favorable.

7. Opportunity for repetitive practice to develop minimum skills.

8. The close supervision and critiquing by the Chief Instructor of student work.

V. SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions are made with the intent that they will contribute to some degree in the improvement of instruction and student learning. They should not be read nor interpreted as any official demand upon the Chief Instructor to implement them. Further, these suggestions have been discussed with the Chief Instructor prior to being placed in this memorandum.

1. While it is true that the course met the objectives as stated to "develop a capability..." it is suggested that some additional time be allocated to this course, perhaps three additional days. The objectives do not specify the level of capability. Obviously, such a skill must be

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practiced extensively for retention and perfection, especially if the student must teach this skill to others. Further, there are perhaps other aspects of this skill that should be taught if additional time were made available but which are not included in the present course for one reason or another. Related to this would be the need for some type of follow-up to former graduates of this course to determine the adequacy of the course in meeting the operational needs of the students.

2. Related to the first suggestion is the problem of practice. It is suggested that on the second day the students be given a short scheduled time (i.e., one-half hour) for practice review of the first day's skill learning. On the third day, 15 minutes scheduled time might be devoted to practice review of the skills from the first day and one-half hour for scheduled practice review of the skills from the second day. On the fourth day, five minutes practice review of the first day and 15 minutes practice review of the second day, etc. In other words, implement the theory of diminishing practice periods. This technique would also assist the students to retain longer any skills obtained in the course. The fourth day is devoted almost entirely to [REDACTED] This extensive time can become rather fatiguing for the students. It is also recognized that the Chief Instructor breaks the day with coffee and lunch periods and urges the students to vary their practice on [REDACTED] or activities. The laboratory work, however, is so fascinating to the average student that he tends to ignore such informal scheduling of practice periods and quickly tires himself. It is suggested that the Chief Instructor actually schedule several different activities during this fourth day in order to break any fatigue problem.

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3. If the Chief Instructor can ascertain from each student his future geographical area of assignment, he might plan some training and practice sessions pertinent to the [REDACTED] most commonly found in that area. For instance, a training board or box can be allocated [REDACTED] and after each student spends [REDACTED] he could then shift the majority of his attention and practice [REDACTED] typical of those which he can anticipate finding in his future assignment.

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4. The pace of instruction is quite rapid during the first day. It is suggested that the Chief Instructor analyze his presentations that day with the objective in mind of covering a little less subject matter and devoting more time to getting the students off to a successful start. It should be borne in mind that the students are new to this subject matter, skill, technique, and terminology and compensation in training procedures must account for this weakness.

5. As mentioned before, the training aids are outstanding in this course, but consideration might be given to the production and use of several larger working mock-ups of the main type [REDACTED]. The instructor could illustrate techniques [REDACTED] on these larger aids. Through such mock-ups the students can better see and learn the precise skill and technique [REDACTED]. At present the Chief Instructor demonstrates these techniques on cut-away models but it is very difficult for several students to closely observe his precise actions, even though they are given opportunity later to actually practice on such cut-aways.

6. At present the Chief Instructor has no written lesson plans. Because of his high degree of proficiency in this subject area and his many runnings of this course, this is not an outstanding deterrent to his instructional ability. It is, however, a weakness to the general conduct of the course since, in case of his absence for any reason, in case of his transfer, or in any case where another instructor would be responsible for the course either temporarily or permanently, the instruction and related learning activities of the students would obviously suffer. It is strongly urged that ample time and clerical support be given the Chief Instructor to accomplish the completion of lesson plans for this course.

7. Related to this primary "additional help" suggestion is the further suggestion that if the student load would increase to more than four in any class, the Chief Instructor should have available an additional qualified assistant instructor since training in such a skill demands almost constant attention and assistance to the student by the instructor.

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25X1A 3. A simple operational type problem or exercise would lend itself nicely to this course, particularly if extended several days. After all, the normal situation in which a [REDACTED] would find himself would be in some type of "stress" circumstance in which he must operate under tension. Such a problem would give him the feeling of what he might have to face in future operations. It could also include such elements of reconnaissance, surveillance, planning, and other related aspects of a typical operational situation.

25X1A 9. If the handout [REDACTED] (in Attachment A) is reproduced again in the future, consideration should be given to simple illustrations in all the chapters and particularly in the "Glossary of [REDACTED] Terminology." Since this material should be read by the student very early in the course, the average student is quite unfamiliar with the many new terms and techniques described therein. Simple illustrations would make the definitions and descriptions of techniques much more meaningful and easier learned.

25X1A 10. Attachment C (TSD Course Critique form) appears to be useful to the instructor since most of the questions ask for fairly specific information. The first question probably provides very little of value to the instructor in making course modifications because of its generality. The lack of space to write many comments under "What suggestions would you make for improvement of the course?" probably discourages some students from getting specific enough to be of maximum use. Although somewhat general in nature, two questions which frequently produce information of some value to course modification are: (1) What do you consider the best feature of the course? and (2) What do you feel were the weakest parts of the course?

11. Attachment D (TSD Evaluation form) might merit consideration as to modification. During the course the instructor uses no objective means of evaluating student performance. For this type of course such a technique is not a prime requirement but could be instituted to assist in forming the final evaluation statement. The Evaluation Form, however, requires the instructor to choose one of four specific rating levels on his

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own observation and judgment of student performance (mental and physical) during the course. This type of subjective evaluation action is not the soundest nor the most valid and might conceivably misinform the student's supervisor when reading and interpreting the completed evaluation. If it is the intent and desire of the instructor to factually rate each student on certain knowledge and skills using scaled ratings, it is suggested that some objective means be developed to assist in this evaluation. If, however, it might be the desire of the instructor to inform the student and his supervisor as to the student's strengths and weaknesses or level of attainment as demonstrated in this course, a different method of reporting should be devised. For example, a revised Evaluation Form might include a statement of the course objectives and a narrative statement of how and what the student was taught and just what activities the student was required to perform. The form would also include statements by the instructor describing what he believed were the student's strengths and weaknesses as noted by his performance in the course. Further, the seventh item "Technician Potential" including the explanatory "NOTE" places the instructor in an extremely critical situation in trying to predict or "estimate" a student's future potential, especially when no factual back-up data are available. It is believed that the instructor should not attempt an assessment type of rating but hold to current course ratings since too many facets enter into making a rating which is "an estimate of the technical ability the student might acquire after advanced instruction and practice...." (This is the same comment the writer made against the same form in the memorandum relative to the Audio-Surveillance Equipment Course on 23 May 1960.)

12. As a modification of his lecturing/demonstration technique, the Chief Instructor should make more extensive use of student questioning to ascertain their comprehension of the subject matter rather than relying mainly on "Are there any questions?" In accordance with the writer's belief that, during any classroom session in which the instructor is leading the class in a more-or-less formal teaching session (i.e., lecturing, etc.) the instructor should refrain from smoking as this is frequently distracting to the students. Smoking during a laboratory

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session or demonstration is permissible since it does not have the element of distraction from his more formal presentations.

VI. SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Chief Instructor of this course deserves a "well-done" for the quality and type of training presented. His display of initiative and conscientious attention to the total training situation is excellent. The several "suggestions" mentioned in this memorandum, while relatively minor in nature, certainly should not be ignored but should be considered in the light in which they are offered; i.e., items to consider for general course improvement, providing administrative and other factors permit. They should be considered only as constructive criticism, especially when compared with the overall effectiveness of the present course.

SIGNED

[REDACTED]
Educational Specialist

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Attachments:

- A. Handouts
- B. Course Schedule
- C. TSD Course Critique Form
- D. TSD Evaluation Form

Distribution:

- Orig. & 1 - Addressee
- 1 - DTR thru PPS and DDTR
- 1 - [REDACTED]
- 1 - PPS

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OTR/PPS: [REDACTED] :nld (26 Oct 60)

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